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Status of implementation of the information and communications technology strategy for the United Nations

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

I. Introduction

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General on information and communications technology (ICT) for the United Nations (A/71/400) submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 70/248 A. During its consideration of the report, the Advisory Committee met with the Chief Information Technology Officer and other representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarification, concluding with written responses received on 1 December 2016.

2. The Advisory Committee recalls that in its resolution 69/262 the General Assembly endorsed all the elements of the ICT strategy as contained in the report of the Secretary-General (A/69/517) and requested him to ensure its implementation taking into account the comments, observations and recommendations of the Board of Auditors (A/67/651) and of the Advisory Committee (A/69/610). Starting from the adoption of General Assembly resolution 69/262, the ICT strategy is being implemented over a five-year period. In its resolution 70/248 A, the Assembly took note of the first progress report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the ICT strategy (A/70/364 and Corr.1) and endorsed the conclusions and recommendations contained in the report of the Advisory Committee (A/70/7/Add.18).

3. The Secretary-General indicates that his second progress report (A/71/400) reflects progress made one and a half years into the implementation of the ICT strategy and provides a comprehensive update of the status of all key initiatives, as well as an overview of the management of ICT globally and a full, updated, five-year budget projection.

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4. In the paragraphs below, reference is made to a number of projects that were expected to be completed by the end of 2016. The Advisory Committee trusts that the Secretary-General will provide the General Assembly with an update on the status of those projects at the time of its consideration of this item.

II. Comments and recommendations

A. Format and presentation

5. The Advisory Committee notes the attention that has been given to its comments regarding format and presentation (A/70/7/Add.18, paras. 13 and 14) and the efforts made to make the progress report more reader friendly. **The Advisory Committee welcomes, in particular, the improvement made to the presentation of the budget projection in section VII of the report of the Secretary-General, which now includes peacekeeping requirements. The Committee encourages the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to present clear and transparent information to support assessment of progress and decision-making by the General Assembly.**

B. Governance and compliance

6. In his report, the Secretary-General indicates that the Secretary-General's Bulletin on the organization of the Office of Information and Communications Technology has been finalized, as have policies and procedures for formalizing designation and delegation of authority (A/71/400, para. 14). He further indicates that, in collaboration with ICT units across the Secretariat, the Office has developed and issued a comprehensive body of 38 policies that cover a range of ICT management topics and that a compliance function to monitor, measure and report on policy implementation has also been instigated (ibid., paras. 15 and 16). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Secretary-General's Bulletin on the Office (ST/SGB/2016/11) had been issued on 21 September 2016.

7. The Secretary-General also indicates in his report that there has been positive and productive collaboration among departments, notably between the Office of Information and Communications Technology and the Department of Field Support (A/71/400, para. 2). Examples are provided of such improved collaboration and coordination between the Office and the Department in several areas, including: (a) the consolidation of applications, data centres and server rooms, networks and help desks (ibid., para. 37); and (b) ICT strategic priorities for budget preparation, human resources, assets and assessment of contracts (ibid., para. 7 (g)). **The Advisory Committee welcomes these developments and commends in particular the efforts made by the Office of Information and Communications Technology and the Department of Field Support to improve collaboration and coordination between peacekeeping and non-peacekeeping entities on ICT matters under the central ICT strategy. The Committee trusts that such collaboration and cooperation will continue to be strengthened and encompass all Secretariat ICT activities.**

8. It is further indicated in the report that challenges remain in certain critical functions, including resistance to the consolidation of ICT resources in some areas and limited compliance with governance aspects (A/71/400, para. 3). In this regard, the Advisory Committee recalls that in its resolution 70/248 A, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General, as a matter of priority, to exercise proactive and strong leadership to ensure full compliance by all entities of the Secretariat with the provisions of section II of its resolution 69/262, including to report to the Chief Information Technology Officer on all issues relating to ICT activities, resource management, standards, security, architecture, policies and guidance. The Assembly further requested the Secretary-General to continue to foster deeper coordination and collaboration within the Organization and emphasized that the full support and commitment of senior management, as well as close and continuous engagement with all stakeholders, keeping in mind the need to address all operational requirements, is integral to the timely and successful implementation of the ICT strategy.

9. **The Advisory Committee expects all Secretariat departments and entities to fully comply with the ICT strategy of the United Nations, as approved by the General Assembly in section II of its resolution 69/262,[1] and all provisions of the Secretary-General's bulletin on the organization of the Office of Information and Communications Technology (ST/SGB/2016/11). The Committee emphasizes the importance of ensuring that budgets and projects from all funding sources for all ICT initiatives and operations of the Secretariat are reviewed by the Office within existing governance structures before their submission to the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts (see ST/SGB/2016/11, para. 2.2 (g)). In this regard, the Committee stresses the importance of the full adherence of managers and all entities in supporting and furthering the implementation of the ICT strategy and the need for them to implement at the operational level General Assembly resolutions and organizational decisions. In view of the foregoing, the Advisory Committee recommends that the Assembly request the Secretary-General to provide, in his next progress report, a detailed update on progress achieved in ensuring the effective cooperation of all Secretariat entities in implementing the ICT strategy, as well as on compliance with the provisions of the Secretary-General's bulletin on the organization of the Office of Information and Communications Technology (see para. 32 below).**

10. In its report on the financial statements of the United Nations for 2015 (A/71/5 (Vol. I), chap. II, paras. 330-363), the Board of Auditors provides an interim follow-up on ICT matters, including an update on the implementation status of the recommendations issued in its two previous reports on ICT matters in the Secretariat, in 2012 (A/67/651) and 2015 (A/70/581). **The Advisory Committee trusts that the Secretary-General will ensure that the recommendations of the Board of Auditors on ICT matters are fully implemented.**

[1] See also General Assembly resolutions 70/248 A, 65/259, 64/243 and 63/262; see also A/62/793 and Corr.1, A/62/793/Add.1 and A/63/487 and Corr.1 and 2.

C. Key initiatives under phase one of the information and communications technology strategy

11. Information on the implementation status of each of the key initiatives under phase one of the ICT strategy is provided in section III (paras. 19-50) of the report of the Secretary-General, with an overview of the implementation status provided in annex II to the report. In annex II.A it is indicated that, of the 20 projects reported in the first progress report (A/70/364 and Corr.1), seven projects have been completed and moved to ongoing operations and 13 strategic projects are ongoing. The seven completed projects comprise: (a) regional technology centres; (b) Umoja assessment; (c) ICT benchmarking assessment; (d) human resources workforce planning and five-year indicative budget projection; (e) Inspira PeopleSoft upgrade; (f) enterprise risk management; and (g) global engineering and conferencing. Annex II.B shows that change requests were made to adjust timelines, phasing or the scope of 10 of the 20 phase one projects. Annex II.C provides summary information on some of the ongoing projects, including their respective start and end dates, the key milestones with the target completion date of each milestone, and overall percentage completion at the time of the issuance of the report. In the paragraphs below, the Advisory Committee highlights some of the issues encountered in the implementation of the key initiatives of the ICT strategy.

Umoja mainstreaming

12. The Secretary-General states in his report that the key deliverables and areas of focus in relation to Umoja are: (a) provision of support for the deployment of Umoja in clusters 3[2] and 4[3] in the areas of network harmonization, integration access and production support; and (b) provision of long-term support for Umoja and transfer of knowledge from the Umoja project to the Office of Information and Communications Technology. Annex II.C indicates that the Umoja mainstreaming project for the transfer of responsibilities from the Umoja project to corresponding entities within the Secretariat involves the following milestones: infrastructure; security; business intelligence; applications; deployment coordination; production support; and administration. It is further indicated that the project started on 1 November 2013 and is expected to be completed by 31 December 2018. Thirty per cent of the project has been completed and, except for business intelligence, which was to be completed by the end of 2016, most of the milestones are planned to be completed by 31 December 2018. **The Advisory Committee emphasizes the importance of achieving all the milestones as well as the need for careful development and strengthening of in-house capacity in order to ensure a**

[2] Cluster 3: United Nations Office at Nairobi, United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations Human Settlements Programme, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (including United Nations Headquarters and the United Nations Office at Geneva as its service providers), Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and United Nations Assistance to the Khmer Rouge Trials.

[3] Cluster 4: United Nations Headquarters, United Nations Office at Geneva, United Nations Office at Vienna, Economic Commission for Africa, Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, Economic Commission for Europe and the international tribunals, and deployment of Umoja Extension 1 in peacekeeping operations/special political missions for international staff.

smooth and timely transfer of responsibilities from the Umoja project to the corresponding entities and the institutionalization of Umoja support.

Information security and disaster recovery

13. The Secretary-General indicates in his report that the 10-point information security action plan is progressing and is 65 per cent complete (A/71/400, para. 20). The information in annex II.C of the report of the Secretary-General indicates that 5 of the 10 initiatives have been completed and that the project, which started on 1 March 2013, was expected to be fully implemented by 31 December 2016. A number of challenges remain, however: departments still need to ensure that the necessary security reviews of certain systems are conducted; not all staff have completed mandatory information security training; and information assets await classification to ensure that information security resources are directed effectively. It is further indicated in the report that the 10-point action plan is expected to transition to a long-term information security programme in 2017, in order to ensure a sustainable approach. **The Advisory Committee trusts that the above challenges will be addressed as soon as possible in order to ensure that the 10-point information security action plan can be completed as planned.**

14. With regard to disaster recovery, the Secretary-General indicates in his report that the number of critical systems has been reduced from 171 to 24, and disaster recovery capabilities have been implemented for 60 per cent of those systems. As also indicated in the report, however, establishing disaster recovery capabilities for large-scale enterprise systems is resource intensive, and the latest assessment reflecting the needs of the Secretariat, as a whole, shows that further investment will be necessary for the remaining 40 per cent of systems requiring disaster recovery (A/71/400, para. 21).

Enterprise application centres

15. Information on the enterprise application centres is provided in paragraphs 23-35 of the report of the Secretary-General. It is indicated that the centres in New York, Vienna and Bangkok are responsible for the development of enterprise solutions to support effective delivery of United Nations mandates. The Office of Information and Communications Technology manages the development, consolidation, modernization and retirement of applications through coordinated governance of the centres. Since 2014, 688 applications have been retired, resulting in a reduction in the number of applications from 2,340 to 1,652 with the goal of further reducing the number of applications to 1,000 by the end of 2020. Additional details on the applications that have been retired, the further rationalization of existing applications and the applications retired as a result of the implementation of Umoja are provided in tables 2, 3 and 4 of the report of the Secretary-General. It is indicated that, of the 454 applications identified to be retired as a result of the deployment of Umoja, 194 have already been effectively retired and that the full implementation of Umoja will allow consolidation of the remaining 260 applications. In addition, all e-mail and messaging across the Secretariat will be consolidated under a unified platform (Exchange/Office 365).

16. The Secretary-General further indicates in his report that the enterprise application centres are responsible for the development of enterprise solutions that

will increasingly replace multiple local legacy systems, automate manual work and processes, manage information and support decision-making. The Secretary-General states that the use of standard, centrally hosted systems allows more consistent and reliable user support, performance, security and business continuity. He also indicates that new standard enterprise applications have been delivered in the following areas: (a) enhancement of Inspira, to support the administration of the mobility programme; (b) harmonization of the e-learning platforms across the Organization; (c) information sharing and collaboration using the Unite Docs and Unite Connections platforms; (d) upgrade of the United Nations Official Document System; (e) automation, tracking and performance management of service delivery using the Unite iNeed platform; (f) field systems for electronic management of contingent-owned equipment (eCOE) and electronic fuel management (EFMS2), and enhancement of the aviation information management system; and (g) the substantive areas of work of the Organization, including prevention of drug trafficking and money-laundering, financial intelligence, conference management support and learning management.

17. **The Advisory Committee welcomes the progress made in operationalizing the enterprise application centres, as well as in reducing the number of applications and delivering new standard enterprise applications. The Committee expects the retired applications to be effectively decommissioned, and trusts that the Secretary-General will provide an update on this matter in his next report. The Committee continues to stress the importance of an effective and coherent application development strategy that eliminates redundant, duplicative and obsolete applications and reduces the high level of fragmentation in this area. The Committee encourages the Secretary-General to continue to refine his analysis of existing applications with a view to further rationalizing and reducing the 1,000 applications that are expected to remain in 2020, and to report on this matter in his next progress report.**

Global wide-area network and Enterprise Network Operations and Security Centre

18. The report of the Secretary-General indicates that a global wide-area network "One United Nations" was established by merging the established networks and systems of the Office of Information and Communications Technology and the Department of Field Support. The "One United Nations" network will allow centralized infrastructure monitoring and support through the Enterprise Network Operations and Security Centre. The network is expected to be completed by December 2017 (A/71/400, para. 36). **The Advisory Committee welcomes the establishment of a single, harmonized wide-area network for the United Nations Secretariat.**

Regional technology centres

19. The Secretary-General indicates in his report (A/71/400, paras. 37 and 38) that the regional technology centres were established in May 2015 and continue to exercise oversight over Secretariat entities on issues such as information security, compliance with ICT policies and the delivery of technological solutions regionally. Achievements to date include: (a) consolidation of service desk functions into five Unite Service Desk hubs; (b) a 16 per cent decrease in the number of data centres

and server rooms globally; (c) consolidation of storage area network devices, with a 20 per cent decrease in the number of storage systems worldwide; and (d) promulgation of information security policies and implementation of the 10-point information security action plan in the regions. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that regional technology centre status had been conferred on the existing ICT structures at the United Nations Office at Nairobi for Africa; at Headquarters in New York for the Americas; at the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific for Asia; and at the United Nations Office at Geneva for Europe.

20. The Secretary-General further states that the regional technology centres complement the regional ICT framework of the Department of Field Support, which facilitates oversight by the Department on the delivery of ICT services in peacekeeping missions through three regional ICT services spanning 35 entities. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that the progress report on the implementation of the ICT strategy should also include a brief update on the achievements of the regional ICT services of the Department of Field Support in order to provide a comprehensive picture of regional ICT activities.**

Enterprise data centres

21. The Secretary-General indicates in his report that major systems have been moved to the enterprise data centres,[4] which allows the hosted applications to take advantage of 24/7 operations and disaster recovery and also ensures application of common information security policies (A/71/400, paras. 40 and 41). The information provided in annex II.C of the report of the Secretary-General indicates that this project, which started on 1 December 2013 and was expected to be completed by 31 December 2016, is 80 per cent complete. The Advisory Committee recalls that in its resolution 63/269 the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to use enterprise data centres rather than local data centres as far as possible. **The Advisory Committee welcomes the progress achieved thus far.**

Global engineering and videoconferencing

22. The Secretary-General indicates in his report that the use of videoconferencing continues to increase, at a rate of 100 per cent each year, with over 25,000 videoconferences held in 2015. In addition, a number of other related systems[5] being implemented are expected to be integrated by the end of 2017. The Secretary-General indicates that further investment needs to be considered in order to meet demand at the current rate of increase in the use of videoconferencing. In addition, it is indicated that requirements for updating of audiovisual and multimedia facilities and replacement of audiovisual and multimedia equipment purchased

[4] The systems hosted at the enterprise data centres include Umoja, iNeed, domain name services, directory services, Unite Identity, Exchange/Office 365 hybrid, e-mail security gateways, shared database farms, Unite Docs, Unite Connections, EarthMed, Cosmos, COMET and the Field Support Suite.

[5] Including: unified communication; a videoconferencing booking and management system; global networking and monitoring; internal cloud videoconference bridging; and operations management.

during the capital master plan project at United Nations Headquarters will be included in the proposed programme budget for 2018-2019 (A/71/400, paras. 42-44).

Unite Service Desk

23. The Secretary-General indicates in his report that the Unite Service Desk consists of five hubs, in Bangkok, Nairobi, Geneva, New York and Brindisi, Italy, which serve as the single point of contact for service requests, problems or inquiries for all key enterprise ICT applications and provide 24/7 support to United Nations personnel worldwide. The Secretary-General further indicates that the Unite Service Desk has been working with the Umoja team and the Department of Field Support since February 2016 to review the production support model in response to the recommendation of the Advisory Committee, endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 70/248 A, that a unified system for Umoja support including peacekeeping entities should be established (A/71/400, paras. 45-47, and A/70/7/Add.18, para. 36). In annex II.C of the report of the Secretary-General, it is indicated that the consolidation of help desks across the Organization, which started in January 2015, is 70 per cent complete and was expected to be finished on 31 December 2016. **The Advisory Committee welcomes the progress made thus far.**

Business intelligence

24. The Secretary-General indicates in his report that coordination of reporting has been mainstreamed into the Office of Information and Communications Technology and that the Umoja data architecture and the business intelligence support functions will be mainstreamed in 2017 through the transfer of staff with relevant skills and knowledge from the Umoja project team to the Office. A number of solutions have been delivered for finance, human resources, supply chain and conference management, as well as for supporting the work of the United Nations in the areas of climate, land, water and energy, and gender. In addition, as legacy systems are retired, their data has been migrated to data warehouses and a number of reporting systems have been developed (A/71/400, paras. 48-50). **The Advisory Committee considers timely access to accurate and reliable information to be a key benefit of Umoja and other ICT systems. The Committee trusts that a detailed update on business intelligence and analytics will be provided in the next progress report.**

D. Phase two of the implementation of the information and communications technology strategy

25. The Secretary-General indicates in his report that phase two of the ICT strategy is focused on facilitating the work of the United Nations in the areas of peace and security, human rights, the rule of law, social and economic development and humanitarian assistance and in all environmental efforts. He further states that the Office of Information and Communications Technology is expanding its work in this area and had developed a number of tools, including: a gender statistics portal; a global political news monitor and a tool called Diplomatic Pulse which will monitor official online government sources of information; an electrification

modelling tool; and an assessment tool for supporting analysis of land-use, water resource and energy systems models. The Office is also leading efforts to build capacity, strengthen coordination and foster collaboration to enhance cybersecurity preparedness, resilience and response (A/71/400, paras. 51-61).

E. Global sourcing and global asset management

26. Information on global sourcing is provided in paragraphs 62 and 63 of the report of the Secretary-General. It is indicated that most vendors to the United Nations (excluding Umoja-related contracts) provide services in multiple locations managed by various offices independently, and that the Secretariat negotiates discounts in certain areas and uses value engineering methodologies in others. It is further stated that there is potential to implement global sourcing through the consistent and effective use of systems contracts and enterprise agreements. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the objective of the global sourcing initiative is to take an inventory of all ICT contracts and assets and identify savings and efficiencies globally.

27. The Secretary-General also states that performance-based contracts are associated with a multi-tier management structure that allows proper control and ownership of global, regional and local contracts, with: (a) a central structure or unit to manage global contracts; (b) regional contract groups to handle contracts that are not used outside a defined scope and area; and (c) local contract groups to handle only site-specific needs. Upon request for further clarification on the performance-based contracts, the Advisory Committee was informed that these referred to the operational model for procurement, gathering requirements and contract administration, which is intended to ensure: (a) that global requirements are designed and procured by teams with the most expertise and who can ensure that the Organization takes advantage of economies of scale; and (b) that performance metrics are developed, monitored and linked to the payment of the vendor. Regional or local teams would be designated to handle cases in which knowledge of regional or local conditions is important. The Committee was further informed that this type of sourcing remained subject to all procurement rules and policies, including those related to effective international competition.

28. In his report, the Secretary-General indicates that a detailed proposal on global sourcing will be developed and submitted in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019. **The Advisory Committee notes that savings and efficiencies can be achieved through global sourcing and looks forward to examining the Secretary-General's detailed proposals. The Committee emphasizes that any proposals put forward must be developed in accordance with all United Nations procurement rules, regulations and policies.**

29. In table 1 of the report of the Secretary-General, it is indicated that the lack of visibility of ICT assets[6] constitutes a risk that is being mitigated through continuous physical verification, and that a solution for managing and registering intangible assets is being explored and business intelligence reports are being designed. With regard to global assets management, it is indicated that all United Nations ICT

[6] Timely and accurate information on the location, movement, status and identity of assets.

assets, including peacekeeping and non-peacekeeping assets, are being monitored throughout the lifecycle of each item from receipt to disposal, and that a review of both tangible and intangible assets and acquisitions was undertaken by the Office of Information and Communications Technology and the Department of Field Support in May and June 2016 to strengthen visibility of the assets and improve control and accountability. The report provides some details on the tangible ICT assets inventory in peacekeeping and in non-peacekeeping entities (see A/71/400, paras. 66-72, and annex III). It is indicated that, in the near future, Umoja will provide the Office of Information and Communications Technology with the opportunity to monitor physical, intellectual property and software licences, which constitute a significant portion of ICT investment and resources. It is further indicated that there is an opportunity to move from individual to enterprise-wide licensing, which could bring significant benefits to the Organization.

30. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that intangible assets were not reflected in the current report of the Secretary-General because the Office of Information and Communications Technology was in the process of developing a system to track intangible assets more effectively. The Committee was further informed that if intangible assets were taken into account, the net book value of ICT assets would increase; however, intangible assets, in particular those that were developed or procured before implementation of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards on 1 July 2013 were not recorded in the Department of Field Support inventory management system. Upon enquiry, the Committee was provided with additional information showing the trend in the value of ICT assets in field missions and non-peacekeeping entities, which is annexed to the present report.

31. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that a comprehensive picture of ICT assets is required to facilitate informed decision-making on ICT investments. The Committee trusts that a solution for managing and reporting comprehensively on ICT assets, including intangible assets, will be implemented expeditiously.**

F. Human resources for information and communications technology

Defragmentation

32. The Secretary-General indicates in his report that during 2015 and 2016 the Broadcast and Conference Support Section (formerly of the Office of Central Support Services), part of the Human Resources Information Systems Section (in the Office of Human Resources Management) and the Financial Information Operations Service (in the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts) were integrated into the Office of Information and Communications Technology (A/71/400, para. 73). The Advisory Committee recalls that it commented on the proposed transfer of the above resources in the context of its first report on the proposed programme budget for 2016-2017 (A/70/7, paras. VIII.34-VIII.37, VIII.57-VIII.60, VIII.86 and VIII.118). The Secretary-General further indicates that ongoing consolidation with respect to the Department of General Assembly and Conference Management, the Department of Safety and Security and the remaining offices in the Department of Management will allow further integration of ICT posts.

33. From paragraph 3 of the report of the Secretary-General, the Advisory Committee notes that the consolidation of ICT resources continues to meet resistance. **In this regard, the Advisory Committee stresses that the cooperation of managers is critical for the successful implementation of the ICT strategy, and it expects them to cooperate and collaborate with the Chief Information Technology Officer in implementing defragmentation and consolidation of ICT capacities, which is one of the key objectives of the ICT strategy. The Committee further expects the Secretary-General to exercise strong leadership to ensure full compliance by all departments and entities of the Secretariat with the provisions of section II of General Assembly 69/262, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General, inter alia, to ensure that all Secretariat entities report to the Chief Information Technology Officer on all issues relating to ICT activities, resource management, standards, security, architecture, policies and guidance (see also para. 8 above).**

34. **In this regard, the Advisory Committee recalls that in its resolution 69/262 the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to reduce the level of fragmentation of the current ICT environment across the Secretariat and at all duty stations and field missions (see also A/69/610, para. 34). The Committee is of the view that there is a need to intensify such efforts at all duty stations, including at Headquarters. The Committee therefore recommends that the Assembly reiterate its request that the Secretary-General reduce the level of fragmentation by pursuing the further consolidation and integration of Secretariat ICT services in accordance with the ICT strategy as approved by the Assembly. At Headquarters, this should result in the responsibilities for the programme of work and financial and human resources of departmental ICT units being assumed by the Office of Information and Communications Technology, in accordance with the approved ICT strategy.**

Career development in information and communications technology

35. Information on a number of issues regarding career development of ICT staff is provided in paragraphs 74-79 of the report of the Secretary-General. These issues include: (a) criteria for the recruitment of National Professional Officers and General Service staff; (b) the need for international posts of a specialized ICT nature with limited managerial responsibilities and expertise in highly technical fields, such as IT forensics, geospatial information services, cybersecurity, cloud computing, systems architecture and complex architecture; (c) the impact of progress in technologies on the nature of ICT skills which need to be built through training; and (d) the need to enhance career development opportunities for staff in the General Service and related categories, which have been proposed in the report of the Secretary-General on human resources management (A/71/323), in particular changes proposed regarding the G-to-P examination. In this connection, the Advisory Committee recalls that the General Assembly considered the report of the Secretary-General on human resources management (A/71/323) and the Advisory Committee's related report (A/71/557) during the main part of its seventy-first session (see resolution 71/263).

36. With regard to the changes proposed regarding career opportunities for staff members in the General Service and related categories, in its report on human

resources management (A/71/557, paras. 43 and 44) the Advisory Committee expressed the view that insufficient analysis had been undertaken on the potential impact on human resources objectives resulting from the proposed elimination of the examination requirement for staff in the General Service and related categories to be eligible to move to the Professional category, and made recommendations that were endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 71/263.

37. **While recognizing the need to provide career opportunities for ICT staff, the Advisory Committee emphasizes that any proposals regarding policy changes related to career development of ICT staff or creation of opportunities to retain experienced qualified ICT personnel, should be presented for consideration by the General Assembly in the context of the Secretary-General's report on human resources management.**

Baseline information and workforce analysis

38. The Secretary-General indicates in his report that the quality of data on human resources has improved with Umoja and that the baseline for posts and contractual personnel was captured in May 2016, combining data from Umoja and Inspira, as well as from the survey conducted by the Department of Field Support for all peacekeeping operations and special political missions. The baseline data for the ICT workforce contained in paragraph 81 of the report provides a breakdown of international and national staff and United Nations Volunteers in non-peacekeeping entities, and staff and other personnel in peacekeeping entities.

39. The Secretary-General also provides an updated workforce analysis for peacekeeping and non-peacekeeping entities (A/71/400, paras. 82-91), which includes data on staff and contractual personnel, categories of staff (Director, Professional, General Service, Field Service, National Professional Officer and national staff) and distribution of workload of ICT personnel by category of staff and functional area. The Secretary-General further indicates that the Office of Information and Communications Technology and the Department of Field Support are reviewing profiles of staff and personnel across the ICT entities in the Secretariat with a view to identifying skills gaps and training needs.

40. **The Advisory Committee welcomes the progress made in refining the analysis of the ICT workforce and providing more detailed baseline information. The Committee encourages the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to further improve his analysis and enhance the baseline information on the ICT workforce. In view of the ongoing defragmentation and consolidation of ICT resources, the Advisory Committee emphasizes the importance of comprehensive, accurate, reliable and consistent baseline information which will be used to assess progress over time. The Committee is of the view that the baseline data should be further broken down by department, office, mission or centre; category of personnel (including staff and contractual personnel); and functional area, and that an update of the expanded baseline information should be provided in future annual progress reports on the implementation of the ICT strategy.**

G. Budget projection

41. Information on the budget projection is provided in paragraphs 92-118 of the report of the Secretary-General. It is stated in the report that a five-year budget projection has been completed, including peacekeeping, based on a comprehensive assessment carried out by the Department of Field Support which takes into account planning assumptions, assets and expenditure patterns, together with benchmarking and cost-benefit studies. It is further indicated that the assessment will serve as a baseline for measuring progress in improving efficiency and effectiveness and for establishing the Organization's future ICT funding priorities.

42. **The Advisory Committee welcomes the completion of the five-year budget projection for the United Nations Secretariat. The Committee considers the projection presented in the report of the Secretary-General to be an initial effort, and encourages the Secretary-General to continue to refine the planning assumptions on which the projection is based, taking into account actual expenditures as well as all other relevant factors. In this regard, the Committee emphasizes the importance of ensuring that the planning assumptions are continuously adapted in order to reflect as realistic a situation as possible. The Advisory Committee recommends that the Secretary-General be requested to present in his next report an updated comprehensive budget projection, including the requirements of peacekeeping and non-peacekeeping entities, based on adjusted planning assumptions for the remaining period of the implementation of the ICT strategy.**

III. Conclusion and recommendations

43. The action to be taken by the General Assembly is set out in paragraph 125 of the report of the Secretary-General. **Subject to its comments and recommendations in the paragraphs above, the Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly take note of report of the Secretary-General.**

Annex

Trends in the value of information and communication technology assets in field missions and non-peacekeeping entities

Field missions[a]

(United States dollars)

	Original purchase value	*Depreciation*	*Residual value*	*Depreciation amount as a percentage of original value*
As at 30 June 2014	629 955 331	287 114 103	342 841 228	45.6
As at 30 June 2015	648 073 725	286 837 049	361 236 676	44.3
As at 30 June 2016	680 295 280	299 288 702	381 006 578	44.0

As at 30 June 2015, information and communications technology (ICT) assets held by peacekeeping operations had an original purchase value of $648.1 million and had depreciated by $286.8 million, resulting in a residual value of $361.2 million. Based on the assumption that all missions will remain in maintenance mode and no acquisitions or replacements will occur between 2016 and 2019, further depreciation will result in a residual value of approximately $246.4 million as at 30 June 2019.

Non-peacekeeping entities[b]

(United States dollars)

	Original purchase value	*Depreciation*	*Residual value*	*Depreciation amount as a percentage of original value*
As at 31 December 2014	131 075 886	101 026 161	30 049 725	77.1
As at 31 December 2015	141 659 399	102 470 884	39 188 515	72.3
As at 31 December 2016*	141 659 399	116 386 673	25 272 726	82.2

* Projected depreciation of asset value as at 31 December 2016, assuming no new acquisitions are made in 2016.

The depreciation is applied based on the useful life of each asset and, assuming no replacements are acquired, the capitalized asset value will decrease by $36.8 million by the end of 2019, as shown in the table below.

[a] Includes a total of 30 peacekeeping operations and special political missions.

[b] Includes 17 offices listed in annex III.B to the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/71/400, such as Headquarters and offices away from Headquarters.

(Millions of United States dollars)

Year	*Net asset value at 1 January*	*Annual depreciation amount*	*Residual value at 31 December*
2016	$39.2	($13.9)	$25.3
2017	$25.3	($10.9)	$14.4
2018	$14.4	($7.2)	$7.2
2019	$7.2	($4.8)	$2.4